DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 467 541 RC 023 666

AUTHOR	Hezel, Francis X.
TITLE	Taking Responsibility for Our Schools: A Series of Four Articles on Education in Micronesia.
INSTITUTION	Pacific Resources for Education and Learning, Honolulu, HI. Region XV Comprehensive Assistance Center.
SPONS AGENCY	Department of Education, Washington, DC.
PUB DATE	2002-06-00
NOTE	49p.; Introduction by Hilda C. Heine.
CONTRACT	S283A950001
PUB TYPE	Opinion Papers (120) -- Reports - Descriptive (141)
EDRS PRICE	EDRS Price MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Academic Achievement; Brain Drain; Community Involvement; Education Work Relationship; Educational Change; *Educational Objectives; Elementary Secondary Education; Foreign Countries; *Pacific Islanders; Parent Participation; *Role of Education; *School Community Relationship; School Culture; *School Effectiveness
IDENTIFIERS	Exemplary Schools; *Federated States of Micronesia; Marshall Islands; Palau

ABSTRACT

Mobilizing communities to support educational improvements is one of the challenges confronting educators in the Freely Associated States (FAS), which consists of the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Republic of Palau. This booklet aims to establish a consensus on broad educational goals and to rebuild the sense of community ownership of schools that is missing today. "What Should Our Schools Be Doing?" describes conflicting views about whether education should provide for manpower training, cultural preservation, or academic skills, given the current poor academic achievement in the FAS and high rates of emigration to find work. It is suggested that a new education system can accommodate all three visions. "How Good Are Our Schools?" attempts to show the current status of schooling in each country but is hampered by incomplete data. Although test scores are the only data consistently available, there are other measures for school success. The challenge is to identify and track those criteria. "The Myth of Education: A Second Look" describes how the lure of easy jobs abroad has attracted young people away from completing education, particularly college. If this emigration trend continues, it will impact the ability of these new island nations to compete in a global economy. "Islands of Excellence" features good schools across the region and their innovative approaches to curriculum adaptation and management strategies. The lesson is that with community support and strong school leadership, successful schools are possible regardless of limited resources and lack of trained teachers. (TD)

Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made
from the original document.

ED 467 541

Taking Responsibility for Our Schools

A Series of Four Articles on Education in Micronesia

By Francis X. Hezel, S.J.
With an Introduction by Hilda C. Heine

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

PACIFIC RESOURCES FOR EDUCATION AND LEARNING

Pacific Comprehensive Regional Assistance Center, Region XV

June 2002

RC 023 666

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Taking Responsibility for Our Schools

A Series of Four Articles on Education in Micronesia

By Francis X. Hezel, S.J.
With an Introduction by Hilda C. Heine

PACIFIC RESOURCES FOR EDUCATION AND LEARNING

Pacific Comprehensive Regional Assistance Center, Region XV

June 2002

This product was funded by the U.S. Department of Education (U.S. ED) under the Pacific Comprehensive Regional Assistance Center, grant number S283A950001 (CFDA 84.283A). The content does not necessarily reflect the views of the U.S. ED or any other agency of the U.S. government.

Table of Contents

Biographies ii

Introduction iii

What Should Our Schools Be Doing? 1

How Good Are Our Schools? 9

The Myth of Education: A Second Look 25

Islands of Excellence 31

References 40

Francis X. Hezel, S.J., is the Director of Micronesian Seminar, a pastoral-based research institution serving Micronesia. He taught at and directed Xavier High School, a Catholic high school located in Chuuk, Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), for many years before moving to Pohnpei, FSM, to establish Micronesian Seminar at its current location. He has written numerous books and articles about Micronesia.

Hilda C. Heine, PREL Scholar for Freely Associated States Education, is the former Director of the Pacific Comprehensive Regional Assistance Center at Pacific Resources for Education and Learning, as well as the former President of the College of the Marshall Islands and Secretary of Education for the Ministry of Education of the Republic of the Marshall Islands.

Introduction

By Hilda C. Heine

Mobilizing communities to support educational improvements is one of the challenges confronting educators in the Freely Associated States (FAS), which consists of the Federated States of Micronesia (Chuuk, Kosrae, Pohnpei, and Yap), the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Republic of Palau. The FAS are currently under a Compact of Free Association with the United States. Efforts to expand public school education during the period of the former Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands alienated, in many ways, Micronesian communities from their schools. Schools became properties of the state and central governments that built, furnished, and staffed them. Efforts to integrate cultural and traditional life that was valued by communities into school activities were discouraged in favor of more "academic content," which included an academic command of the English language and memorizing names of presidents of the United States. Schools became places to learn to be "smart" in the Western sense and to get ahead in a "modern" existence that was becoming the norm in most urban locations in Micronesia. In time, schools became strange places to many community members. They were not only strange places, but teaching values and beliefs contradictory to island lifestyles as well.

This series of articles, *Taking Responsibility for Our Schools*, was produced as part of the Taking Responsibility for Our Schools: A Community Education Project. The project, conducted in 2001 in the FAS, was a collaboration between Micronesian Seminar and Pacific Resources for Education and Learning (PREL). Other products include two videos, *Islands of Excellence* and *The Goals of Ed U. Cation*, and six radio programs presented in the local languages of the FAS.

All four articles in this series were written by Father Francis X. Hezel, Director of Micronesian Seminar, while serving as a Visiting Scholar at PREL in September 2000. Assistance in researching, conceptualizing and reviewing articles, and collecting data from education departments in the region was provided by PREL staff who served on the project. The staff consisted of Micronesian and non-Micronesian educators at PREL, including Keres Petrus (Chuuk), Destin Penland (Palau), Rod Mauricio (Pohnpei), Martin Weirlangt (Pohnpei), Cheta Anien (RMI), Kavita Rao, and Ormond Hammond. Members of the Pacific Curriculum and Instruction Council from the FAS also provided assistance in reviewing and critiquing articles, as well as in collecting educational statistics used in the articles. PREL Service Center personnel and educators in each of the FAS took active roles in planning the project, reviewing articles, and serving as community liaison.

The hard work of Micronesian Seminar in producing the two accompanying videos and several radio programs for the Community Education Project is gratefully acknowledged. The project is indebted to Micronesian Seminar staff, including Jason Aubuchon, Patrick Blank, Anelisa Garfunkle, Augustine Kohler, and Eugenia Samuel for their dedication and professionalism.

The Community Education Project came out of the recognition that it is through community participation in education that education can improve. In the FAS, the level of community engagement and participation in education has to rise to an acceptable level not only in terms of the number of people involved, but, more importantly, in the substance of that involvement. It is foolish to expect more from communities when we have not given them opportunities to understand what modern education is all about and their role in shaping that education. To engage communities in a modern education system, members of the community must be able to discuss with educational leaders the purpose and goals of education. They must also feel a sense of ownership for the education institu-

tion in their community. The Community Education Project attempts to bridge the knowledge gap between those who provide education and those who receive it.

The goal of the project has, therefore, been to work toward establishing a consensus on broad educational goals in each of the FAS entities by examining different visions of education and its educational goals and by presenting strengths and weaknesses of each. The next step will be an attempt by communities to rebuild that sense of school ownership that is so critical but missing today.

"What Should Our Schools Be Doing?" is designed to assist FAS citizens in looking at their own society by examining selected demographic and economic realities as important backdrops to education. Information is offered on population growth rate, size, and significance of emigration in recent years, and employment opportunities in countries and overseas, especially the United States, in the near future. It also attempts to present a realistic view of the economic realities today and how these would seem to affect the broad goals of education that currently exist.

"How Good Are Our Schools?" attempts to show the current status of schooling in each entity by presenting educational statistics currently available at each education department/ministry. Based on these statistics, the quality of schooling is compared within an entity and across entities. This article is the most controversial of the four articles. First, there is no uniform definition across the region of what constitutes a good school. Second, there were limited school and student data from which to make meaningful comparisons among schools. Although test scores are not the only quality indicators from which to judge the success of a school, these were the only data consistently available across the region from which comparative analyses could be made. The data suggest rather than prove that some schools are better than others. There are other measures for which school success could and should be gauged. The challenge is for communities and educators in the region to identify those criteria based on what they perceive the purpose of education to be for their respective communities.

"The Myth of Education: A Second Look" presents the current reality vis-à-vis job opportunities in the FAS. The fact is that there are limited job opportunities in each of the entities, as compared to the number of high school and college educated young people. This means that although education was once a key to a job, it is no longer the case. The lure of easy jobs abroad has attracted young people away from completing formal education, particularly college education. If this trend continues, it will have a lasting impact on the ability of these new island nations to compete in a global economy unless effective policies are put in place to deal with the emigration issue. The ability of emigrant populations to successfully adapt and "make it" in their newfound homes abroad, particularly in the United States, is a shared concern for the FAS and the United States, but primarily for FAS island nations. The people are national resources whether or not they are physically present in the home country.

"Islands of Excellence" features good schools across the region and identifies essential elements that go toward making a school a successful one. This final article describes a few of the innovative approaches to curriculum adaptation and management strategies that have made featured schools successful. Some of the common themes that stand out in these successful schools are strong community support and strong school leadership provided usually, but not always, by the school principal. The lesson is that given community support and strong schoo! leadership, successful schools are possible across the region, regardless of limited resources and, in some cases, lack of trained teachers.

The articles do not present the final authority on the status of education in the FAS. They are one perspective on the issues and challenges faced by educators in the FAS. The articles should serve to start a discussion among community members, FAS educators, and others interested in education in the FAS. Arguably, the indicators of success used may not be as relevant for all FAS people, nor are they reflective of cultural values, belief systems, and standards that should inform success in a community and cultural sense. However, they can serve as the basis from which to question the relevance of educational frameworks that inform the development of educational curriculum, standards, and pedagogy in the islands.

In the end, it will be difficult to establish a consensus of the broad goals of education without government, community, and traditional leaders coming together to discuss and clarify development goals of the respective countries. As two of the three FAS countries discuss their future relationships with the United States, it is incumbent on their leaders to be strategic about development policies that form the basis of any future Compact relationship. There are many lessons to be learned from the past 15 years of Compact relationship and development policies that have resulted in the current state of education in the FAS. Unless the FAS entities are able to establish a consensus around a realistic vision of development in the future, 15 years from now the education challenges will remain as they are today.

What Should Our Schools Be Doing?

By Francis X. Hezel, S.J.

What is the purpose of education in the Freely Associated States of Micronesia today? Ask that question of Micronesians, and the responses fall into three distinct categories.

- *Manpower Training.* Advocates for this goal seek economic improvement by providing young people with the skills to find employment, no matter how menial.
- *Cultural Preservation.* Many people believe that the traditional culture is under attack by modern society. They say the first call of education is to turn out individuals who can maintain some continuity with the past.
- *Academic Skills.* The guiding belief here is that education ought to teach people to read, write, and think. By providing the best and the brightest with a first-rate education, some of these graduates might return to lead their nations out of the economic desert.

Where Students Go

Before examining these different views more closely, let's look at where students go when they leave school. There are three streams of young people flowing to different destinations. Some return to the village where they live on the land. Some end up in town seeking whatever employment can be found. Others go abroad to find work in the U.S. or one of its flag territories such as Guam or Saipan.

At one time, school dropouts tended to head back to the village, high school graduates clustered in the towns in search of full-time employment, and those with some college background and exposure to life in the U.S. might establish roots abroad.

But today's picture is very different. Consider these real-life examples from recent years.

- A young man drops out of elementary school in the 6th grade and heads for Guam to work in construction as a day laborer. He speaks little English and has never been overseas. He has learned some carpentry skills from his grandfather, who attended a Japanese carpentry school prior to World War II.
- A young woman returns from Australia where she earned her college degree. The daughter of a mixed marriage, she has grown up speaking English and is uncomfortable with her Micronesian language. She decides to seek employment in town because she wants to care for her younger brothers and sisters.
- A graduate from a private high school has lived in town for a couple of years following his graduation but can find no job there. He attends a few workshops on sponges and shells and serves as a teacher's aide for a while. He decides to return to the village to fish and farm and perhaps find work for a small cash income.

These examples illustrate how complicated our young people's needs have become. The 6th grade dropout requires basic English skills and solid work habits to succeed in Guam. The college graduate may need advanced training if she is to find a government job. She must also improve her use of the local language. The high school graduate can live off the land in a supportive community, but he also desires a part-time source of cash.

What then should Micronesia's schools teach to support its young people in achieving their goals?

Goal 1: Manpower Training

Advocates of manpower training view education as a way to bring about prosperity for both the individual and the society. They might say something like this: "Micronesia doesn't need eggheads, more planners, and college grads. It needs people who can replace the expatriates now working in the islands." To them, a relevant education is a matter of providing the skills that young people need to get jobs.

Supporters of this goal are openly critical of the type of education offered Micronesian students throughout the past decades on the grounds of its irrelevancy. They argue that while emphasis on the humanities is fine for the U.S. and other developed countries, the islands don't have the career choices offered Americans and Europeans. Education is relevant only to the extent that it enables young people to find jobs in a society that is still under-developed. By emphasizing vocational training, Micronesia's education system could produce employable young men and women to help turn around its economy.

Even today, many parents plead with teachers to provide job training to their sons and daughters. Educators look with covetous eyes on the large sums of federal funds earmarked for preparing youth for the "world of work." They question why they shouldn't stress manpower training in the schools if that's what it takes to get program money. Members of Congress, pressed by their constituents to show economic progress, pressure the schools to prepare young adults to find and hold jobs. All subscribe to the view that schooling – above all else – ought to provide a livelihood for young men and women, while simultaneously moving the national economy forward.

But Where Are the Jobs?

For all the talk about preparing young people for work, the harsh reality is that there are few jobs available in most parts of Micronesia today. The governments are cutting back on available positions, and growth in private business has not met expectations. The Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI), and the Republic of Palau (Palau) under pressure from donor nations, are cutting the size and cost of government. FSM has reduced the number of positions through voluntary retirements. RMI is going through this painful process now, and Palau is under pressure to follow.

Although there has been some growth in the private sector in FSM and RMI, it has not met expectations. Promises of a thriving local fishing industry and an increase in tourism have not materialized. In the last decade, employment in FSM and RMI has grown, though marginally. Only in Palau has there been unambiguous growth, thanks to the tourist boom. However, the growth of the tourist industry has not created a large number of jobs for Palauans. Many of the newly created jobs are low-paying positions that are being filled by expatriates. The slowdown in job growth in most of Micronesia is reflected in Table 1.1.

TABLE 1.1. JOBS IN MICRONESIA: 1970-2000

Year	FSM	RMI	Palau
1970	4,702	2,796	1,893
1980	9,760	4,108	2,745
1990	13,940	6,839	5,438
2000	15,928	7,221	9,225

Sources: For 1970, figures were taken from *34th Annual Report to the United Nations*, by the U.S. Dept. of State, 1982, p. 51. For 1980, figures for FSM were taken from *First National Development Plan*, by the FSM Office of Planning and Statistics, 1985, Table 8.6, p. 92; for RMI, from *First Five-Year Development Plan*, by the RMI Office of Planning and Statistics, 1985, p. 42; for Palau, from *Statistical Yearbook 1994*, by the Republic of Palau Office of Planning and Statistics, 1995, Table 37. For 1990, figures for FSM were taken from *Proceedings*, by the FSM National Government, 1999, p. 31; for RMI, from *Marshall Islands Statistical Abstract 1992*, by the RMI Office of Planning and Statistics, 1994, Table 6.7, p. 53; and for Palau, recalculated by the author based on figures from *1990 Census*, by the U.S. Dept. of Commerce, 1992, Table 61, p. 90. For 2000, figures for FSM were taken from *FSM Economic Statistics*, by the FSM Dept. of Economic Affairs, 2000, p. 18; for RMI, recalculated by the author based on figures from *1999 Census*, by the RMI Office of Planning and Statistics, 1999, p. 187; for Palau, recalculated by the author based on figures from *2000 Census*, by the Republic of Palau Office of Planning and Statistics, 2000, Table 55, p. 93.

Expatriates, many of whom are Asian, hold approximately 10% of all the salaried jobs in FSM and RMI (see Table 1.2), but the idea that jobs held by expatriate employees will become available to nationals when the expatriates leave may be an illusion. In FSM and RMI, there will not be enough of these jobs for all those entering the workforce during the next two years. Additionally, training local people to take over the skilled positions held by many expatriates in accounting, management, and the trades will not be easy.

TABLE 1.2. EXPATRIATE EMPLOYEES IN MICRONESIA

	Total Expatriates	Total Population	Number Percentage	Number of Employed Workers	Eligible	Percentage
FSM (1994)	3,205	105,507	3%	1,744	14,381	12%
RMI (1999)	1,651	50,840	3%	570	7,221	8%
Palau (1995)	4,355	17,225	25%	3,446	7,710	45%

Sources: 1994 FSM Census, by the FSM Office of Planning and Statistics, 1994, Table 57, p. 59; *1999 Census of Population and Housing*, by the RMI Office of Planning and Statistics, 1999, Table 1, p. 37; *1995 Census of Population and Housing, Republic of Palau*, by the Republic of Palau Office of Planning and Statistics, 1995, Table 55, p. 91.

Most of the jobs available to young Micronesians today are overseas. Since the Compact of Free Association went into effect in 1986, hundreds of people from FSM and RMI have emigrated to Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI), and the U.S. to find jobs. An estimated total of 25,000 Micronesians – or 1 out of every 8 citizens of the Freely Associated States – was living abroad in 2000, as indicated in Table 1.3. Most of them have left their islands within the last 15 years seeking jobs they could not find at home.

TABLE 1.3. ESTIMATED TOTAL EMIGRATION BY 1980 AND 2000

Year	FSM	RMI	Palau	Total
1980	500	0	2,500	3,000
2000	14,000	5,000	6,000	25,000

Sources: Figures for 1980 were taken from "Micronesian Emigration: The Brain Drain in Palau, Marshalls and the Federated States," by F. Hezel and M. Levin, 1990, p. 42. Figures for 2000 were estimated by the author.

What Job Training Is Needed

Businesses often are willing to provide the specialized training that applicants need for the few jobs in Micronesia. Restaurants, stores, and bars do their own training, as do the companies that hire people to prepare tuna loins for shipment to Tokyo for the sashimi market. Even those applying for more technical positions, such as telephone repair, can learn the skills needed for their new jobs through the company that hires them.

What do employers look for in applicants? A woman who-owned a bar on Guam employing several Micronesians had one simple requirement for employment: show up for work on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday. A businessman on Pohnpei remarked that he hires only females. According to him, they are more dependable than men.

Instances where job recruits need specialized training are rare. Generally, employers are looking for someone who is dependable, knows how to work a full day, and learns quickly. They downplay previous work skills and emphasize work habits and the ability to learn new things.

In view of the economic realities in Micronesia today and the poor job prospects everywhere except Palau, young people seeking employment can either create jobs for themselves or leave the islands for places where jobs await them. The crowded airports in Pohnpei on Sunday evenings, with 30 or 40 garlanded young men and women bidding goodbye to their families, suggest that an increasing number of people believe they must seek employment in U.S. cities like Orlando or Kansas City. These people include degree holders as well as elementary and high school dropouts.

Recruiters who employ Micronesians as care facility attendants for the elderly plantation workers in the Maui pineapple fields or as workers at Sea World are not necessarily looking for skilled employees. Like the local island businesspeople, they are looking for employees who possess a good attitude toward work, reliability, and the readiness to learn new things. All workers, especially those traveling abroad, also need adaptability skills. In short, potential workers need a solid basic education to prepare them for the world of work.

Goal 2: Cultural Preservation

Many Micronesians believe that culture is the most important thing to be learned in school. They argue that identity is grounded in culture and language, and cultural preservation is all the more critical in a day when traditions are under attack from the forces of modernization. They view formal education as a powerful Western institution that represents one of the main threats to culture. Therefore, the school's function should be to educate the young in their traditional culture rather than to wean them from it. Local language should also be a priority, even if this means de-emphasizing English.

Culture is an essential dimension of any legitimate education. But understanding the relationship between education and culture requires a closer look at how culture is defined and the ways in which education can respond to and serve cultural needs.

The culture of a people is always evolving. Therefore, the definition should include the living culture found in the islands today – not just some historical relic preserved in a jar on a museum shelf. Culture today includes not only the oral narratives and chants of the past but also the automobiles, VCRs, grocery stores, gas stations, and paychecks of the present. It includes any of the practices, beliefs, and attitudes that a people hold – those that can be traced back centuries, like canoe construction and traditional navigation, as well as those adopted from abroad in recent years like ear studs, baggy pants, and tastes in rock music. If education is to embrace and respond to the culture, then it must take into account both the new and the old.

Certain elements of culture are symbolic of a people's identity and history. Navigation and weaving, for instance, are especially representative of the atolls of the central Carolines. Likewise, ceremonies to honor chiefs, including the ritual of pounding and serving *sakau*, are distinctive of Pohnpei. Legends and oral history play an important part in the traditions of every island culture. Educators can incorporate some of these elements into the curriculum, provided they are taught in a way that allows for the development of thinking skills and other necessary tools. Otherwise, they remain curiosities that impede students from learning the skills needed to adjust to today's world.

During my years as principal of Xavier High School, I was acutely conscious of the need to allow culture to permeate both curricular and non-curricular areas of school life. When we overhauled the social studies curriculum in the early 1970s, we wanted the material to reflect island concerns and to be taught so that it engaged island students. We asked students to interview their parents to obtain oral histories and other information about their communities. Yet, we insisted that students do more than simply acquire this information. They were expected to process the knowledge: to compare and contrast, analyze and evaluate it. In this way, they responded to the richness of their cultural background while developing the thinking skills that would serve them for a lifetime.

Nonetheless, culture cannot be taught in a classroom. Culture is acquired in the home and the community. The school's responsibility lies in reinforcing culture by infusing it into every aspect of school life. Culture should inform every subject, every spoken word, every nuance. This happens in schools where Micronesian teachers draw on personal experiences to advance the education of their students.

The challenge for schools today is to weave culture into both curricula and policies, rather than reduce it to a single program or two. Elements of traditional culture such as oral history and language can be taught in ways that are harmonious with the other goals of education, including literacy and higher thinking skills. Education then builds on the past to lead students into the future.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Goal 3: Academic Skills

Those who champion academic skills maintain that the purpose of education is to develop the mind. They may agree that some attitudes and values can be absorbed along the way, but these are secondary to a school's main mission: the development of students' intellectual abilities. They argue that the point of education is to emphasize basic skills such as literacy, mathematics, and language. However, the point of education is to keep learning as much as possible, not simply to master these or other skills. Advocates of this goal value traditional disciplines such as science and social studies not only for the development of the mind, but also for how the information relates to the students' physical and social environments. Courses in computer science and business are acceptable only to the extent that they contribute to these goals.

The history of education in Micronesia is marked by continuing tension between the "traditionalists" who hold this view of education and the "reformists" who believe that the school systems in Micronesia ought to adapt to the reality of life in the islands. Traditionalists – while recognizing the obvious cultural differences between the U.S. and the Pacific islands – maintain that Islanders deserve the same opportunities to develop their minds that the Americans, Japanese, or Australians enjoy. Anything else denies the more talented Islanders – the future leaders of island nations – the education needed to compete successfully with other nations in the global village of the future.

Reformists argue that what is appropriate for educationally developed countries like the U.S. may not be best for the Pacific. A school program designed to promote academic skills produces an education for an elitist crop of graduates who will continue their education, one school after another. In the end, they are suitable only for white-collar work either in government or in private business. Critics believe that these graduates, who are unsuited for manual work in the trades or farming, will have serious problems adjusting to island life when they return. Some view them as de-cultured individuals, who under the spell of foreign thought and attitudes have turned their backs on their own cultures, lifestyles, and folkways.

Even more serious are the reformists' claims that only the best and brightest survive this demanding system, leaving a number of casualties along the way. Those who are left behind, they argue, are destined to drop out before finishing school, becoming nothing more than debris on what is a pathway to success for a few talented persons. In the view of the reformists, all students are casualties: those who succeed and become cultural orphans, and those who are spewed out before finishing school.

How Elitist Are Our Schools?

The clash between adherents of this classical view of education and those upholding more island-friendly schools is genuine. Yet, facts suggest that the imagined outcome of our academic education system is not necessarily the real one. For nearly 30 years now, large numbers of young Micronesians have gone abroad for education in U.S. colleges. Despite the fears of a large brain drain and concern for cultural re-entry problems, the overwhelming majority of such students have returned to their islands and adapted successfully to town life in the Pacific. In 1982, 10 years after federal Pell grants opened the doors to U.S. colleges for thousands of Micronesians, there were only a few hundred citizens of FSM and RMI still living permanently in the U.S. Others returned home to re-adjust to island living and find whatever jobs were available (Hezel & Levin, 1990).

The dropout rate that critics of an academic-skills system fear is indeed high. Between 20% and 30% of all elementary students leave school before finishing eighth grade. The rate is even higher for high school students. In FSM and RMI, approximately 50% of all students leave school before high school graduation (see Table 2.18 on page 23).

Impossibly high standards of education are not to blame for forcing students to leave school early. Those who remain in school fail to reach the U.S. norms in math and reading skills. In FSM and RMI, students are performing significantly below the standards set for these island nations. In RMI, for instance, test results from a five-year period in the late 1990s show that almost two-thirds of all students failed to meet national norms in math, English, and even the Marshallese language (see Tables 2.12 and 2.13 on pages 18-19). Students have not met FSM standards since national testing began in 1995 (see Tables 2.6 and 2.7 on pages 14-15). Even in Palau, where academic standards are higher, only 12% of all high school students can read at the U.S. 4th grade level (Palau Ministry of Education, personal communication, 2001).

Despite the poor test results and high dropout rate, increasing numbers of young Micronesians are leaving for distant destinations to find employment. Those who seek their fortunes abroad may not always be the best educated Micronesians. They include a large number of high school and elementary school dropouts. Therefore, educators in Micronesia today do not have the luxury of focusing just on those students with the most potential. They must also offer basic skills in English and math to young people who are likely to go anywhere and do anything.

Three Paths or One?

In the context of Micronesian societies today, it is possible to merge these three visions into a single set of goals that embraces all students, no matter their career choices or ethnic interests. What is needed is a new education system that leaves the 1970s and 1980s behind and responds to the realities of island societies today. As heirs to the global economy, our young people face far more complicated options than previous generations.

Can one mode of education fit all? It never has. Educators must adapt without sacrificing basic skills, which are the survival skills for our young people wherever they choose to live. While encouraging our students to reflect on who they are and where they come from, we must give them what they need to make their way into the future.

How Good Are Our Schools?

By Francis X. Hezel, S.J.

For more than 20 years now, since self-government began in the late 1970s, we have been running our own school systems. Isn't it time that we stepped back, took a long look at the performance of our education system, and asked just how good our schools are?

Some may squirm a little at this question for fear that the answer might prove embarrassing. Yet regular evaluation is standard procedure for every organization. We assign our students grades and give them report cards periodically during the school year to measure their progress. Why shouldn't we grade our schools on their performance in an effort to determine how the education system under our care is doing?

This may be an especially opportune time to take a long hard look at our school systems inasmuch as the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) and the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI) are renegotiating U.S. assistance under the Compact of Free Association. The U.S. is urging the two nations to establish clear objectives and benchmarks for what they hope to accomplish in the next several years. Education reform, however, should not be motivated by a desire to satisfy our donor nations. It should be done out of concern for our own young people, whose futures will depend in great part on the quality of education they receive. We fail them and ourselves if we don't give them the best education we can.

Even if we work up the courage to evaluate the performance of our schools, it's not easy to get the information needed to do so. There is an absence of uniform test data that would permit us to make comparisons across national boundaries. The California Achievement Tests during the late 1960s and the Micronesian Achievement Test Series in the 1970s, both of which allowed regional comparisons, have been discontinued. Finding test data for comparison even within a state or nation can be challenging. The test scores used in this article, while they are the best data available, may be open to different interpretations, sometimes raising as many questions as they answer. Administrators are often reluctant to release test data on the grounds that it can be used for crassly political purposes, but perhaps underlying this is the fear that this information will reflect badly on their schools and discredit their own work.

The Public's Need to Know

Educators seem to agree that education reforms will never be accomplished without the full support of the local communities. Since the centralization of education in the early 1960s, we have learned that even a strong and well-motivated education department is unable to accomplish education reform on its own. Unless the communities take ownership, there will never be substantial improvement in village schools. Yet, if we expect a community to assume responsibility for its school, people need feedback. They should know not only how their school has improved over recent years, but how it stands in relation to other schools in the area.

Based on complaints from parents and community members, communication between education administrators and the communities is still not what it should be. The communities say that they still don't know how the schools are doing or what problems they face today. On the other hand, education administrators sometimes complain that the communities show little interest in attending meetings at which such matters are discussed. If local responsibility is ever to occur, education administrators will have to provide the communities with the information they need to gauge the success of their efforts.

Educators and the politicians who pay their salaries are sometimes nervous that unfavorable comparisons will be made between schools. I've heard this on more than one occasion while gathering data for this article. It would greatly help educational reform, however, if comparisons were made between local schools and between states or nations. Competition has always been a great motivating force in Micronesia. It has driven people to move mountains – literally, if you accept the theory that Nan Madol, with its huge basaltic rock walls, was constructed by Pohnpeians for fear not of their master's lash but of being shamed by their rivals.

There are numerous examples of the constructive use of competition in all areas of life, including providing for funerals, church feasts, and village celebrations. Competition is a vital force in island life, and it can be a potent tool for education reform as well. At a recent education conference, I heard a man recount how his small island community was galvanized some years ago when, as the results of the high school entrance test were broadcast on the radio, they discovered that their school was ranked near the bottom of schools in Chuuk. The community met to decide what to do about the situation and agreed that for the next several months they would provide food to support the teachers so they could run a remedial program after school. There was no request for overtime pay, no request for supplementary funds. The community itself took the measures needed to improve the products of their school. But they probably never would have done it had they not been embarrassed so publicly.

We acknowledge the importance of prestige and village pride. We use this to goad communities to perform well in athletic contests. Why don't we use the same motivation to get them to improve their schools?

The Marks of Success

How do we gauge school performance? One possibility is to assess the academic achievement of the young people the schools produce. The problem with this, however, is that an individual's performance on standardized tests may reflect the student's personal ability more than anything that the school did for the student. Xavier High School, for instance, is known to have its pick of some of the brightest youth throughout the entire region. Would high test marks at the end of four years of Xavier reflect the caliber of its student body more than the performance of the school?

Private schools often appeal to brighter students from families that set a high value on education. For this reason, the balance is already tipped toward private schools in any measure of student performance. In public schools, however, we may presume that such disparities will be minimal. There may be some bias in favor of an urban population, since students living in town are more likely to come from families on wage employment who set a higher value on education, are in a better position to assist with homework, and are more likely to have amenities such as electric power and privacy in the home. Yet, these factors, as important as they may be, do not seem decisive in determining the quality of a school, since many of the best schools in each state are in rural areas.

There are other norms besides test scores that could be used to determine the caliber of a school. For example, in our research we found that certain indicators seemed to correlate well with the quality of the school. These include low teacher absenteeism and the cleanliness of the school campus, although not necessarily the state of repair of the school buildings themselves. This suggests a high degree of community involvement and a sense of ownership of the school. Schools that had a reputation for quality also seemed to have low dropout rates. It was as if parents knew that their children were part of a worthwhile effort that would prove beneficial in the future.

FSM Elementary Schools

Education in FSM varies among its four states. Per-pupil expenditures are listed in Table 2.1 as just one example of this variation.

TABLE 2.1. FSM STATE PER-PUPIL COSTS: PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOL AVERAGES (1993)

State	Per-Pupil Average
Chuuk	$421
Kosrae	$910
Pohnpei	$913
Yap	$888

Source: Human Resource Development in Micronesia, by the Asian Development Bank, 1996, p. 245.

Chuuk. Chuuk administers a test to all 8th graders to determine who will be admitted to junior high school. The results of this test for the last six years (in this case, 1995-2000) are used by the department of education to rank elementary schools in the state. The top five public schools (see Table 2.2) include two from Faichuk, an area in the western part of the lagoon that has long been regarded as one of the poorest in the state. Mechetiw, the top-scoring school, is a village school on Weno that opened only about 10 years ago. Moch, the third-ranked school, has been recognized for several years as one of the leading schools in the state.

The four private elementary schools in Chuuk, with mean scores ranging between 64% and 75%, are among the top 10 schools during this period. The highest ranking of them, St. Cecilia's School (75%), is still surpassed by three public elementary schools.

TABLE 2.2. CHUUK PUBLIC SCHOOLS WITH THE HIGHEST AVERAGE SCORESON THE HIGH SCHOOL ENTRANCE TEST (1995-2000) (AVERAGE SCORE BY PERCENTAGE)

School, Location	Average Score	School, Location	Average Score
Mechetiw, Weno	83%	Likinioch, Mortlocks	71%
Peniata, Wonei	81%	Sino Memorial, Tonoas	63%
Moch, Mortlocks	78%	Iras, Weno	63%
Sapetiw, Wonei	73%	Namoluk, Mortlocks	62%
Pwene, Fefan	73%	Munien, Tol	59%

Source: Unpublished statistics from the Chuuk State Education Department, compiled by the author.

Kosrae. Although for years Kosrae has had a policy of open admission to high school, the state began testing 8th graders in 1997. The results of this high school entrance test for 1999 and 2000 were used to gauge the performance of public elementary schools on the island. The average scores in English and math for Kosrae's six elementary schools are given in Table 2.3. Of special interest here is the relatively small gap between the schools on the list, indicating that Kosrae's elementary schools are all at approximately the same performance level, at least as measured by this test.

TABLE 2.3. KOSRAE HIGH SCHOOL ENTRANCE TEST RESULTS (1999-2000)
(AVERAGE SCORE BY PERCENTAGE)

School	Language Score	Math Score	Average Score
Utwe	51%	68%	60%
Lelu	47%	70%	59%
Sansrik	50%	62%	56%
Malem	45%	64%	55%
Tafunsak	45%	62%	54%
Walung	43%	64%	54%

Source: Unpublished statistics from the Kosrae State Education Department, compiled by the author.

Pohnpei. The state of Pohnpei has amassed good data on the average pass rates on the public high school entrance test for each elementary school over the past 13 years. Table 2.4 presents information about the five top-scoring public schools in the state. Seinwar Elementary School, generally regarded as the strongest public school in the state, has had a 70% pass record for its 8th graders throughout the years. Rohnkiti, now known as Nanpei Elementary School, has the second highest rate over this period. Ohmine and Net, two other schools with very high reputations, are also among the top five schools in pass rates. Mokil is the only outer island school with a pass rate higher than 40%.

TABLE 2.4. POHNPEI PUBLIC SCHOOLS WITH THE HIGHEST PASS RATES ON THE HIGH SCHOOL ENTRANCE TEST (1987-1999)

School	Number of Test Takers	Number Passing	Percentage Passing
Seinwar	283	198	70%
Rohnkiti	212	138	65%
Mokil	122	67	55%
Ohmine	1173	617	53%
Net	772	332	43%

Source: Unpublished statistics from the Pohnpei State Education Department, compiled by the author.

20

The six schools at the very bottom of the list of Pohnpei's 31 public elementary schools showed pass rates of less than 20% over the past 13 years. Three of these schools are from Sokehs Municipality, two are from Madolenihmw, and the one at the very bottom is an outer island school with a pass rate of only 12%.

There are other schools that are showing improvement in their test scores. Awak and Sokehs Powe, for example, which have had occasional bursts of glory, appear to be making steady progress in recent years. Wone School is another that is beginning to make real strides toward quality education.

The private elementary schools on Pohnpei – Seventh Day Adventist Academy, Pohnpei Catholic School, and Calvary Christian Academy – outscored even the highest of the public schools with an average pass rate of 74%. This is 2 1/2 times higher than the 28% average pass rate of all Pohnpei public schools.

Yap. In Yap, the exit tests taken by all 8th graders in 1998, 1999, and 2000 show some clear patterns among the state's elementary schools. These tests include math, reading in English, and writing. Perhaps the most notable finding is that the Outer Island elementary schools generally score well below the schools on Yap Proper. Outer Island schools average nearly 10 percentage points less than public schools on Yap Proper, as Table 2.5 indicates. The two private schools in Yap – St. Mary's School and the Seventh Day Adventist Academy – have an average score that is not much higher than some of the state's best public elementary schools. Yap is distinctive in being the only state in which public schools are not thoroughly outclassed by private schools.

TABLE 2.5. YAP EXIT TEST SCORES BY SCHOOL GROUP (1998-2000)
(AVERAGE SCORE BY PERCENTAGE)

Schools by Group	Number of Schools	1998	1999	2000	Average Score
Yap Proper public schools	11	74%	76%	75%	75%
Outer Island public schools	12	68%	64%	64%	65%
Private schools	2	82%	83%	80%	82%

Source: Unpublished statistics from the Yap State Education Department, compiled by the author.

On Yap Proper there seem to be fewer standout schools, either at the top or at the bottom, than in other places. Of the 11 schools on Yap Proper, 9 attained an average score of above 70%; another was close, but the other was significantly lower. A number of schools were bunched together at the top: Fanif with an average score of 80%; Gagil, Gilman, and Tamilang with scores of 79%; Rumung with a score of 78%; Delipebinaw with a score of 77%; and Maap with a score of 76%. Seventh Day Adventist Academy topped the list with an average of 83%, followed closely by St. Mary's with 81%.

The best of the Outer Island schools were Mogmog (78%) and Falalop (74%) in Ulithi, with Fais (71%) and Fasserai (71%) close behind. Most of the other schools averaged 60-70%, but a few of the smaller ones showed averages well below these.

Rating the States in FSM

High school entrance tests give us some idea of how elementary schools within each state rank against one another but offer no basis for comparing the states educationally. For this we must turn to the results of the National Standardized Tests (NSTs) that have been administered in FSM since 1995. The test is given uniformly to 6th, 8th, and 10th grade students from select schools in each state. In all, more than 650 students in grade 6 and nearly as many in grade 8 are tested. The elementary schools chosen for the test are, with one exception, all public schools; there are no Outer Island schools among them. At the grade 10 level about 250 students are tested, with all public high schools represented in the testing, including the newly-opened Neighboring Islands Middle School on Woleai in Yap. The NST tests students in language arts and in mathematics. The weighted scores, as shown in Table 2.6, not only give some sense of the progress made by students from one grade level to another, but also offer us a glimpse of how states measure against one another.

TABLE 2.6. FSM NST LANGUAGE ARTS (1995-1997)
(AVERAGE SCORE BY PERCENTAGE)

Entity	Grade 6	Grade 8	Grade 10
Chuuk	34%[a]	N/A	53%[a]
Kosrae	58%	63%	74%
Pohnpei	53%	60%	64%
Yap	50%	53%	63%

Source: Unpublished statistics from the FSM Office of Education, compiled by the author.
[a]Results based on the 1995 test only.

In the language arts test results, Kosrae students scored consistently higher than students from other states. Pohnpei scored higher than Yap, but the only significantly higher score was registered in the 8th grade. Chuuk's scores were the lowest, trailing Kosrae's by about 20 percentage points and Yap by 10-15 percentage points. All states showed an increase in scores from lower grades to higher grades.

The scores on the math exam are less clear-cut than those on the language exam. Pohnpei and Kosrae appear to be neck-and-neck for the highest score (see Table 2.7). Yap students scored between 5-10 percentage points lower than the top two, while Chuuk students scored another 5-10 percentage points lower than Yap. Surprisingly, scores everywhere drop sharply in 10th grade, as if students peak in math in the 8th grade, at the end of elementary school.

TABLE 2.7. FSM NST MATHEMATICS (1995-1997)
(AVERAGE SCORE BY PERCENTAGE)

Entity	Grade 6	Grade 8	Grade 10
Chuuk	31%[a]	N/A	29%[a]
Kosrae	39%	54%	45%
Pohnpei	41%	55%	44%
Yap	35%	46%	38%

Source: Unpublished statistics from the FSM Office of Education, compiled by the author.
[a]Results based on 1995 test only.

FSM High Schools

How are the high schools in FSM performing? As is the case with the elementary schools, there is no test data to show the success rates of individual high schools as measured against state or national standards. For a general picture of how the graduates of these schools compare with one another on a single test, we may consult the results of the yearly entrance test administered by the College of Micronesia-FSM (COM-FSM). Although high school seniors are not obliged to take this test, nearly all do in three of the four states: Pohnpei, Kosrae, and Yap. Only in Chuuk is there a significant difference between the number of graduates and the number of test takers. There, according to the numbers of Chuuk High School students and the numbers of those students who take the COM-FSM entrance test, only 25-30% of public high school 12th graders take the test.

Table 2.8 shows the percentage of 12th graders passing the COM-FSM entrance test each year between 1994 and 2000. The average pass rate of the school over the seven-year period is listed in the last column. During the last two or three years, pass rates rose significantly, suggesting either that there had been considerable improvement in recent graduating classes or that the test was adjusted downward to meet the achievement level of the student population.

Three of the public high schools show an average pass rate of 40-50%: Pohnpei Islands Central School (formerly PICS, recently renamed Bailey Olter High School or BOHS) leads with 50%, followed by Kosrae High School with 46%, and Yap High School with 41%. Outer Islands High School (OIHS) in Ulithi, Yap State, scored significantly lower with an average pass rate of 28%. Standing alone at the bottom of the list is Chuuk High School, with an average of only 5% passing the test over the last seven years.

TABLE 2.8. FSM PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOLS: PASS RATES ON THE COM-FSM ENTRANCE TEST (1994-2000) (PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS PASSING)

School	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	Average
PICS/BOHS	38%	27%	37%	44%	65%	65%	72%	50%
Kosrae HS	35%	40%	22%	38%	40%	75%	73%	46%
Yap HS	29%	44%	25%	24%	47%	59%	60%	41%
OIHS	35%	26%	11%	19%	27%	39%	39%	28%
Chuuk HS	8%	3%	1%	2%	5%	8%	11%	5%

Source: Unpublished statistics from the FSM Office of Education, compiled by the author.

The ratings of the FSM public high schools closely mirror the results of the FSM NST. There appears to be very little difference in the educational standards for elementary and high schools among Yap, Pohnpei, and Kosrae. Chuuk, however, scores lower than the other three states at the elementary level and significantly lower at the high school level.

Chuuk's low standing is more a matter of poor school performance than lack of inherent ability in its students, as indicated by a look at the pass rates of private schools. Saramen Chuuk, a Catholic high school that opened just 10 years ago, had an average pass rate of 62%, well above that of any public high school in FSM. Xavier High School scored even higher (85%), but the school draws its student body from the whole of Micronesia, not just Chuuk. Three other private high schools in Chuuk – Berea Christian School, Seventh Day Adventist Academy, and Mizpah – showed pass rates of 22-31%. Although well below Yap High School, Kosrae High School, and PICS/BOHS, the pass rates for these three private schools were much higher than for Chuuk High School.

Let us add here a word on how private high schools, which until very recently were found only in Chuuk and Pohnpei, fare in these COM-FSM entrance tests. As shown in Table 2.9, the four private schools on Pohnpei, which improved consistently through this seven-year period, recorded an average pass rate of 61%. The six private high schools in Chuuk had an average pass rate of 49%. In both states, private schools showed a pass rate well above the state average.

TABLE 2.9. PRIVATE HIGH SCHOOLS IN CHUUK AND POHNPEI: PASS RATES ON THE COM-FSM ENTRANCE TEST (PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS PASSING)

State	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	Average
Chuuk	50%	49%	44%	32%	53%	58%	56%	49%
Pohnpei	46%	36%	49%	60%	78%	79%	82%	61%

Source: Unpublished statistics from the FSM Office of Education, compiled by the author.

Even when private schools' results are added to public school performance on the COM-FSM entrance test, the difference between states is still striking. Table 2.10 illustrates how the states' public and private high schools combined compare in terms of pass rates on the test. Pohnpei has the highest average pass rate (52%), followed by Kosrae (46%) and Yap (35%). At 24%, Chuuk's average pass rate is about half that of Pohnpei and Kosrae.

TABLE 2.10. FSM STATES: PASS RATES ON THE COM-FSM ENTRANCE TEST (PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS PASSING)

State	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	Average
Chuuk	29%	23%	23%	16%	24%	28%	27%	24%
Kosrae	35%	40%	22%	38%	40%	75%	73%	46%
Pohnpei	40%	29%	41%	42%	69%	69%	75%	52%
Yap	29%	36%	21%	22%	40%	48%	51%	35%

Source: Unpublished statistics from the FSM Office of Education, compiled by the author.

RMI Elementary Schools

Two tests that can help measure performance of elementary schools are given to 8th graders each year in RMI. There is a high school entrance test, as in FSM, for which cumulative results are available for the years 1993-1999. In addition, the Pacific Islands Literacy Level Skills (PILLS) test is given each year to determine the number of at-risk students in three subject areas: English, Marshallese, and mathematics. Though the test is designed to identify students who have failed to achieve the minimal standards in these areas, Table 2.11 shows test percentages from the best elementary schools in RMI. The gap between these schools and those at the bottom of the list is great. Over 30 schools in RMI had an average pass rate of less than 20% on the high school entrance test, with 11 schools showing an average of less than 10%. The best schools by both standards (entrance test and PILLS test) are the two schools on Likiep. Wotje and Mejit are the next best according to both criteria. The others listed in Table 2.11 have the next highest entrance-test pass rates, although some have poor average scores on the PILLS test.

Table 2.11. RMI Elementary Schools With the Best Pass Rates on the High School Entrance Test (1993-1999) and Scores on PILLS Test (1994-1998) (Rates and scores by percentage)

School	Average Entrance Test Pass Rate	Average PILLS Test Score
Likiep, Likiep	82%	69%
Melang, Likiep	64%	70%
Wotje, Wotje	61%	51%
Mejit, Mejit	60%	56%
Tobal, Aur	59%	16%
Ajeltake, Majuro	55%	30%
Namdrik, Namdrik	51%	34%
Jabor, Jaluit	49%	32%
Ebon, Ebon	48%	59%

Source: Unpublished statistics from the RMI Ministry of Education, compiled by the author.

As in FSM, private schools in RMI are far outperforming public schools. The percentage of private school students passing the entrance test is 20 percentage points higher than public schools, and the pass rate for private school students on the PILLS test is nearly double that of public school students, as shown in Table 2.12.

Table 2.12. RMI Private and Public Elementary Schools: Average Pass Rates on the Entrance Test and PILLS Test (Percentage of students passing)

Type of School	Percentage Passing Entrance Test	Percentage Passing PILLS Test
Public schools	31%	29%
Private schools	51%	59%

Source: Unpublished statistics from the RMI Ministry of Education, compiled by the author.

A breakdown of the PILLS test results over the recent five-year period yields some startling results. That private schools outscore public schools in math and English is perhaps not surprising to most people. But the results of the PILLS test also show that the private schools, despite their relatively large expatriate enrollment and their emphasis on English, are doing better in the Marshallese language than the public schools (see Table 2.13). The gap between the public and private schools in Marshallese is not as wide as it is in English and math, but it is significant. Only 21% of the public school students in RMI have achieved minimal standards of English, but not many more (30%) have reached a satisfactory level in their own language.

Table 2.13. RMI Public and Private Schools: Pass Rate in PILLS Test (Percentage of students passing)

Subject	Public schools	Private schools
Math	37%	70%
English	21%	63%
Marshallese	30%	45%
Overall average	29%	59%

Source: Unpublished statistics from the RMI Ministry of Education, compiled by the author.

RMI High Schools

To assess high school performance in RMI, the only measure available is the results of the placement test for the College of the Marshall Islands (CMI). In this respect, gauging high school performance in RMI is no easier than it is in FSM. The CMI placement test, with its English and math components, is given annually to as many 12th graders as wish to take it. Students are sorted into four levels: the first three are sub-standard and indicate the need for remedial courses, while the fourth indicates readiness to begin a college degree program. Table 2.14 shows the cumulative number of students from each high school that took the test from 1993-1999 and the percentage of students scoring high enough in English and math to be eligible for acceptance into a degree program.

Table 2.14. RMI High Schools: Cumulative Results of the CMI Placement Test (1993-1999) (Percentage of students eligible for a degree program)

School	Number of Students Tested	English	Math
Assumption HS	64	66%	34%
Calvary HS	86	7%	13%
Jaluit HS	111	14%	31%
Marshall Islands HS	375	22%	16%
Marshalls Christian HS	117	7%	9%
Seventh Day Academy	145	15%	25%

Source: Unpublished statistics from the College of the Marshall Islands, compiled by the author.

Private high schools, which serve over half the high school population, are a more significant factor in RMI than in FSM. Table 2.14 indicates that the performance of students from private schools varies greatly. Assumption High School is the highest scoring school in both English and math, but the small number of students tested – an average of only nine a year – indicates that not all graduat-

ing seniors took the test. Other private schools placed much lower in both parts of the test. Results for the two public schools – Marshall Islands High School and Jaluit High School – are also varied.

Palau Elementary Schools

The Palau Achievement Test (PAT), which is based on the curriculum framework for Palau, is administered to all students in the 4th, 6th, and 8th grades of elementary school as well as in the 10th and 12th grades of high school. The test results for 1997-2000 are used here as a basis for comparing the public elementary schools in Palau. Although the test covers five subject areas, only three have been used: math, English, and Palauan.

Table 2.15 lists the schools that have scored highest on the test over the past four years. The average mean score for the three grades (4th, 6th, and 8th) in each of the three subject areas is shown in the table. The schools listed below are the only public schools that had an overall score of 50% or higher on the test.

TABLE 15. PALAU PUBLIC SCHOOLS WITH HIGHEST SCORES ON PAT (1997-2000)
(AVERAGE SCORE BY PERCENTAGE)

School	Average Math Score	Average English Score	Average Palauan Score	Average of Combined Scores
Melekeok	42%	59%	58%	53%
Koror	42%	59%	56%	52%
Peleliu	44%	53%	55%	51%
Angaur	43%	56%	53%	51%
Aimeliik	39%	58%	52%	50%

Source: Unpublished statistics from the Palau Ministry of Education, compiled by the author.

The spread in the test results in math is not particularly wide: only 10 percentage points between the highest and lowest ranked schools. In language arts, however, the spread opens up to 21 percentage points in English and 22 in Palauan, with some of the smaller, more remote schools at the bottom of the list. One point of interest here is that schools that scored well in English also tended to score well in Palauan, and those that scored poorly in English also scored poorly in Palauan. This finding, which mirrors test results for the PILLS test in RMI, suggests that English and local language learning build on rather than interfere with each other.

Palau High Schools

Palau Community College (PCC) administers a placement test each year for all high school seniors who wish to take it. The test is composed of two parts: English and math. Virtually all seniors take the English section, although only 65-80% take the math section. Table 2.16 shows the cumulative percentages of students from each high school who passed the test during the period 1995-2000. All high schools in Palau are represented except for Palau Mission Academy, which had only a handful of students take the test for just one year.

TABLE 2.16. PALAU HIGH SCHOOLS: RESULTS OF PCC PLACEMENT TEST (1995-2000)

School	Number of Students Tested in English	Pass Rates in English	Number of Students Tested in Math	Pass Rates in Math	Total Average Score
Mindszenty HS	197	86%	128	33%	65%
Emmaus HS	82	89%	64	23%	60%
Palau HS	601	73%	406	16%	50%
Bethania HS	50	78%	61	20%	46%
Belau Modekngei	48	54%	38	8%	34%

Source: Unpublished statistics from Palau Community College, compiled by the author.

Two private schools, one Catholic and one Protestant, ranked highest in the results: Mindszenty High School had the best average score on the test, with Emmaus High School not far behind. Palau High School, the only public high school, placed midway down the list. Math scores were far below English scores for all the schools.

Comparisons Across National Lines

There are very few common tests taken by students in RMI, FSM, and Palau, so comparison across boundaries is difficult. A relatively small number from each nation take the U.S. Armed Forces qualifying exam each year, but they are not necessarily representative of their cohort. Graduating seniors once took the Scholastic Aptitude Test, but this does not seem to be as widely required by colleges now as it once was.

One test that is still administered to a fairly large number of 8th graders each year is the entrance test for Xavier High School. There are problems with using the results of this test as a measure of achievement in the different island groups, to be sure. For one, the test is not professionally composed and those who take it may not be representative of the elementary school graduates in each place. Nonetheless, the test is taken by many who are near the top of their classes and so might offer a look at how the top end in each place compares with its counterparts in the other islands. Table 2.17 shows the aggregate results of the Xavier entrance test for the school year 1999-2000.

TABLE 2.17. XAVIER HIGH SCHOOL ENTRANCE TEST RESULTS BY ISLAND GROUPS (2000)

Island Group	Number of Students Taking Exam	Number of Students Scoring Above 70%	Number of Students From Private Schools	Number of Students From Public Schools	Number of Students Scoring Above 80%	Highest Score
Chuuk	210	20	17	3	2	81%
Kosrae	71	14	0	14	0	77%
Pohnpei	192	79	26	53	35	90%
Yap	89	13	8	5	2	85%
RMI	143	18	15	3	8	92%
Palau	32	24	15	9	14	95%

Source: Unpublished statistics from Xavier High School, Chuuk, compiled by the author.

It is always risky to rely too heavily on a single test in drawing any broad conclusions, but the Xavier entrance test seems to confirm many of the findings on the quality of the schools in various places. First of all, public school results are weakest in Chuuk and RMI, with only three public elementary students in each place attaining a qualifying score of 70% or higher. At the other end of the distribution spectrum stands Pohnpei, where twice as many public school students as private school students qualified. All the schools in Kosrae had at least one student passing, while Palau showed a strong success rate for four different public schools.

Palau scored higher than most other places in the test results, with a top mark of 95% and 14 students scoring above 80%. In Pohnpei many more students took the test than in Palau; they also did well, with 35 students scoring above 80% and a top mark of 90%. If this test is indicative of school performance, then education in Palau and Pohnpei surpasses that of other parts of the region.

Finally, Kosrae seems to be the most even of the island groups in school performance. There were no standout schools in the test, just as there were no standout individual performances. The top mark for Kosrae of 77% was the lowest of the island groups.

Other Indicators of Educational Quality

Another possible measure of educational quality is the retention rate, which is the obverse of the dropout rate since it measures the percentage of students remaining in school. Figures in Table 2.18, compiled from recent education statistics, show that Kosrae has the highest retention rates through elementary school and high school. This may be because of its small and concentrated population and its policy of universal secondary education. Palau also has a small population as well as a long history of valuing education, and it has the next best retention rate through primary and secondary school. Yap and RMI get a higher percentage of their 8th graders into high school than Pohnpei and Chuuk, but they seem to be no more successful in keeping them there. As indicated in the table, for every 100 students who start 1st grade, approximately 60 or fewer complete 12th grade.

Table 2.18. School Retention Rates for Micronesia

Entity	Grade 1	Grade 8	Grade 9	Grade 12
Chuuk	100	67	35	15
Kosrae	100	82	77	61
Pohnpei	100	71	44	28
Yap	100	74	60	35
RMI	100	75	53	28
Palau	100	78	70	50

Source: Estimated by the author based on recent education statistics from the respective entities.

Although not a measure of educational quality as such, the educational attainment of the general population is an indicator of how pervasive education has become in the community. Table 2.19 compares educational attainment for FSM, Palau, and RMI. Palau rates well above FSM and RMI at every level beyond elementary school education. More than half the Palau population 25 years of age or older have completed high school, compared to only slightly more than a third of those in RMI and FSM. The gap between Palau and the other two nations is even greater at the college level. A much greater percentage of Palauans (31%) have had some college education compared to people in FSM (18%) or RMI (15%).

Table 2.19. Educational Attainment of the General Population (25+)

Education Level	FSM (1994)	RMI (1999)	Palau (1995)
Finished elementary school	60%	85%	79%
Finished high school	36%	39%	64%
Some college	18%	15%	31%
Finished college	5%	4%	10%

Sources: 1995 Census, by the Republic of Palau Office of Planning and Statistics, 1995; *1999 Census*, by the RMI Office of Planning and Statistics, 1999, p. 153; *1994 FSM Census*, by the FSM Office of Planning and Statistics, 1994.

Conclusion

The limitations in this paper are obvious, for we draw on sometimes sketchy data to make broad comparisons between schools, not just with language and math areas but across state and national lines. Even if we make allowance for the lack of uniformity in the test instruments from place to place, test scores are not in themselves sufficient to gauge the quality of a school. Such scores may be good measures of student achievement, but they are not always definitive measures of school performance. For this reason any of the conclusions offered here must be provisional.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

In our eagerness to find some measure of school performance, we have used whatever indicators we could find, even if they were not certain measures of the quality of the schools we were examining. While it is true that students with greater natural ability will score higher in tests no matter what school they attend, we have assumed that over time the difference in individual student abilities in most schools will cancel out. If this is the case, then the average test results may, indeed, be said to represent the performance of a school rather than the innate intelligence of its students. As for schools enrolling many above-average students year after year, we must assume that the reason for this is the reputation for quality education that the school holds. Good students tend to gravitate toward good schools.

We have referred to data used in this paper as indicators of performance, for they suggest rather than prove that some schools and some areas are doing better than others at present. As we work to develop more and better indicators of the success of our educational programs, we are forced to work with what we have. This paper is a provisional but pioneering effort to gauge the success of our schools, one that we hope sheds a small light on how our schools are doing today. It appears from the data on hand that we have a long way to go before our schools perform up to our own expectations. There is a great deal of room for progress in our education systems. How good are our schools? We may not have answered that question satisfactorily here, but we should certainly continue to ask it.

The Myth of Education: A Second Look

By Francis X. Hezel, S.J.

In the past, a good education was the equivalent of a winning lottery ticket. The formula was a basic truth of life: Success in high school meant a chance to attend college, which in turn translated into a good job and guaranteed material prosperity (perhaps fame as well) for the individual. For the family, it meant lasting security.

After a couple of decades of disillusionment, however, the Micronesian public has become skeptical about the myth of education. Back in the 1960s and 1970s, there may have been government positions ready for recent graduates to step into, but there are not anymore. Governments are trimming their workforce due to cuts in U.S. assistance; and private jobs, which still depend largely on government spending, are limited. Whatever happened to the gold-lined promises that education held out for the population? People today are looking at those who hold elected positions and noticing that a good number of legislators, mayors, and other functionaries have had little formal education. In fact, some holding these positions have not even finished elementary school. Successful businessmen are not always the star pupils of 30 or 40 years ago, either. People draw the obvious conclusion that to get ahead, you do not need much of an education.

The old formula – education equals a good job – is no longer the axiom it was 30 or 40 years ago. Perhaps this was inevitable after a generation of college educated young people returned home to discover that the jobs they expected were not to be found. Their parents learned that education, which once seemed a sure investment, does not always pay off.

Young Micronesians going overseas today reflect this change in mentality. In the early 1970s when federal program grants for college were first made available, there were long lines of young men and women at the departure gate of airports everywhere in Micronesia headed for college in the U.S. Some may have gone away for the adventure, as their ancestors did a century and a half earlier when they signed on whaling ships to see the world. Most probably saw college as an opportunity to obtain a share of the good life that a steady job and a good salary made possible.

Today, Micronesian students no longer have to register as college students to justify their stay in the U.S. as they did during pre-Compact times. Now that they can enter and leave the U.S. freely, young people ask themselves why they should sit in a classroom when they can be out making $8 an hour – a fortune compared to the $2 or $3 an hour that new workers might be making on their own islands. It's only later that young people find out that their $8 hourly wage, which puts them close to the bottom of the food chain in the U.S., is barely enough to support a single person, much less a family, given the cost of rent, insurance, health care, and other necessities. Belatedly they learn that the best way to obtain a more secure job status is to get an education. By that time, unfortunately, they have already left school, beguiled by what once seemed like a huge salary.

Back to the Village – Still an Option?

Even in the earlier halcyon years, most people took an ambivalent attitude toward education. While they were quick to recognize the material value of an education, there have always been other, more immediate needs that cried out for attention. There were small children to be cared for, household tasks to be performed, and food to be gathered and cooked. The family could always use another hand to help out in these tasks. Some families might send their sons and daughters to school on a

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

trial basis. If the children did well, they might be urged to go on for further education upon graduation. The family was usually prepared to dig deep into its savings to invest in the education of someone who exhibited signs of potential success. If youngsters proved slow, on the other hand, they might be pulled out before finishing school to help the family at home. The theory was that children could retreat back to the land and live productive and happy lives in the village.

Times have changed a bit since then. Today older children might be sent to Guam or Saipan or the U.S., where they would be expected to find a job a week or two after stepping off the plane. The same young people who in the past might have retreated to the village as hope of finding employment faded now often fly off to a distant U.S. city. There they will have to find wage employment, if only as a security guard or shop clerk. They will be expected to become fluent in English. They will have to adjust to a new, although not entirely unfamiliar, culture.

For the past 15 years, Micronesians have been leaving in large numbers to find wage employment in a radically different social environment. Even those who choose to remain in Micronesia are living in a very different economic climate from those of a generation or two earlier. Youth who went off to college in the early 1970s might have returned to find open positions waiting to be filled, but graduates today will have to make jobs for themselves and create their own work opportunities.

The Need for Education in an Age of Globalization

Globalization has arrived both as an opportunity and as a threat. Micronesians, now scattered across half the planet, experience the links between distant places in more powerful ways than before. These new Pacific island nations have taken their place alongside the older countries just as their people have long dreamed of doing. Micronesians are now competing on the same terms as people from other nations in the world marketplace, just as Samoans and Hawaiians and Cook Islanders have for years.

In his article "The Many Faces of Micronesia: District Center and Outer Island Culture," Mason (1975) described what he called the "two Micronesias." One Micronesia was the simple island society of the anthropology textbooks, in which people ate the fish they caught and the breadfruit or taro they harvested, using the little cash they earned for luxuries. The other was the new town society, with store shelves heaped with imported food, traffic problems, television, and all the social problems that grow out of modernization. Today there are no longer two, but three Micronesias: the village, the town, and the migrant community settled somewhere in Texas or Oklahama or Arkansas. More importantly, the cultural distance between the town and the village has shrunk. Even outlying islands are no longer culturally insulated from the forces of modernization, as changes in lifestyle in these places indicate. Some of the outer islands now have government power, refrigerators, and computers. A retreat into a completely traditional island setting is no longer an option.

In past years families sometimes considered education an option reserved for children who were brighter and more intellectually nimble. Those who were not so capable could stay in school as long as their education did not greatly inconvenience the family. Now, in the era of the "three Micronesias" and the diminishing difference between town and village, there is no place left for young people without schooling. They are becoming misfits, no matter what sector of society they inhabit. Education is becoming a necessity for everyone, not a luxury reserved for the specially talented.

Education is the training camp that prepares our young people to compete successfully with other societies for a share in the market. An education gives people what is sometimes called "cultural capital" – that is, a fund of knowledge on many issues that can eventually be converted into something

marketable. It offers people choices in employment, entertainment, and lifestyle that they would not otherwise enjoy. Even more, education makes it possible for a person to comprehend what is happening in the world. Without a good education, the individual lacks the eyes to see, the ears to hear, and the tongue to speak to today's people.

Before We Can Improve Our Education

As important as education has become, our school systems in Micronesia are in need of major surgery. Our public schools are only a fraction as effective as they could be, and they are still far from attaining the national education standards that have lately been put in place.

In view of the growing importance of education for everyone in Micronesia, improvement of our schools is a critically urgent need. Before genuine education reform can take place, however, certain conditions must be met.

First, our confusion about the goals of education must be resolved. We have to be clear on what we're trying to do in our schools. At present, public opinion on the purpose of education is very much divided. Some think the schools should be training a future workforce. Others expect the schools to teach the basic skills: perhaps the three Rs and some thinking skills. Still others, seeing education as the sole means of preserving cultural heritage, would like the schools to bond the young to their culture. In a fruitless attempt to please all parties, we throw in a little of this and some of that without first establishing a clear consensus on what we are attempting to do. In trying to do everything, we risk accomplishing nothing. If we are to avoid the pitfall of trying to do too much, we will need to obtain a consensus on the goals of education, whether it be an emphasis on one goal or some combination of the three.

Second, we will have to take a clear-eyed look at just how well our education system is doing now: where it is succeeding and where it is failing. This will require an honest effort to evaluate the performance of our schools, to release the findings of the evaluations, and to acknowledge the results even when they show that some of our schools are not meeting minimum standards. We must communicate the results of this evaluation honestly and directly to the public that is being served by the schools rather than disguise the results to avoid embarrassment for ourselves or others. In addition to test results, we may have to use records on teacher performance and other data to help us discover what in the schools is in need of repair.

Third, we will have to rid ourselves of the self-serving myths that we and our consultants have perpetuated to explain the defects of our education system. Past studies and reports have often suggested that if only our teachers were paid better or had more training, if only our schools had more textbooks or more up-to-date textbooks, and if only our students did not have to learn in a second (or third) language, our education system would be able to crawl out of the hole it is in. This is not to deny that funding, textbooks, and language background are important; it is simply to say that they should not bear all the blame for our failures. With what we do have, our schools could and should be doing much better. As long as we cling to these myths, we absolve ourselves from the responsibility of doing anything significant to improve education, for all the elements that we claim are bringing about the malaise in our schools are beyond our control.

Finally, we must harness the energy of the community. Ordinary people must take an interest in and responsibility for improving education. Unless they come to expect more of the system and voice their concerns, in whatever culturally appropriate way they might choose, educational reform will never happen. Things happen in any society when people make them happen. Only when communi-

ties take real ownership of their schools will principals, teachers, and students be put under pressure to perform. Education should be a partnership between the education department and the people in the community.

We can do a great deal to improve our education systems once we know what we want of our schools and where we are falling short of our expectations. Once we stop blaming fate or calamities beyond our control for our education problems, and once we resolve to accept the responsibility of working for good education, we are halfway there.

One Key to Reform: High Expectations

Good education does not just happen. It emerges from a school environment that encourages learning. Principals, teachers, students, and the local community support one another in the educational enterprise, but they challenge each other as well. The school environment may not be as easy to define as some of the other elements we are used to looking at like well-maintained buildings, teacher-student ratio, and per-pupil expenditures, but it is far more critical in determining how well the school and its students perform.

High expectations are a critical part of a productive school environment. If principals think of their teachers as unproductive and lazy, chances are high that that is just what they will be. If teachers think of their students as stupid and sluggish, students will live up to what is expected of them. On the other hand, if students sense that much more is expected of them, we will be pleasantly surprised to find that they will elevate their performance to the level being asked of them. This is a psychological phenomenon that has been affirmed again and again in education and management studies.

Let me offer a personal example. After a recent operation on my shoulder, my doctor suggested that I undergo therapy with trained professionals in order to recover full movement of my left arm. At first I wondered why I could not be given a booklet with instructions and left to do the therapy exercises on my own. My first session, however, removed any doubt in my mind that the therapy was a necessity. I could never have forced myself to stretch my arm beyond the threshold of pain to what I feared was the breaking point. It simply would have hurt too much if I had to do this on my own. With the therapist gently twisting my arm backward, however, I was able to expand the limits of motion well beyond what I thought was possible. Forcing the shoulder backward and forward was necessary if I was ever to recover the range of motion that I once had.

During my 15 years at Xavier High School, I assumed a role similar to that of the physical therapist. Just as the therapist forced me to do things I never would have chosen to do, I tried to demand of my students work that they would have preferred to avoid. I can still remember the look on their faces when I walked into class and announced that they would have two weeks to read Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment* and submit a paper on the book. "But when do you expect us to do all this?" they asked. I casually replied that there were weekends and evenings and other spare moments during the week. To the surprise of my students, they found that they could read the book and do the report in the allotted time.

My students surprised themselves often during those years – by the amount they read and the number of papers they wrote and perhaps also by the growing ease with which they were able to do such assignments. Yet, I was only imposing on my students in much the same way that my teachers had imposed on me during my own years of schooling. They had made demands on me that I gladly would have squirmed out of if I could, but our education system did not permit enough wiggle room for that to happen. Expectations of students in my high school were lofty, and the summons to per-

form was strong. When we would begin to falter from time to time, we would hear the old refrain from teachers, echoed by our parents, ringing in our ears: "Canisius High students don't come to school without finishing their homework . . . or fail state exams . . . or eat pretzels during class . . . or speak without raising their hands."

Most of us, when we are young, have no idea what we are capable of achieving. Only with the help of patient but demanding teachers, teachers who lay down standards for us that we would never have had the audacity to set for ourselves, can we discover what we can accomplish and what we can become.

The Other Key to Reform: Strong Controls

If the climate of success depends on what level of expectations exists in the school, it also depends on the strength of the controls that operate within the school system. It is one thing to raise expectations and quite another to enforce them. Expectations are translated into reality by an effective management system that imposes controls on the principals, teachers, and students. Educators often use their own terms for expectations and controls; they refer to this linked pair as standards and accountability.

If a school is to function as it should, principals must make demands on their teachers, beginning with the demand that teachers show up every day for class. Teachers must be prepared for class and put real effort into teaching. Principals must establish the ground rules for the school while making it known to their staff that mediocrity is unacceptable. This is to say that the principal has the primary responsibility of elevating expectations in all quarters of the school.

Principals can and should take the lead, but they are not wonder-workers. They cannot single-handedly bring about the changes needed in the school. They dare not risk making enemies with their staff since they, like everyone else, will have to deal socially with their teachers during off-hours. To improve the climate of the school and to raise expectations of their staff, principals will need the support of their community. In the end, it is the community that must get the word out that its school will only be satisfied with excellence; spotty attendance records and half-hearted efforts by the staff will not be tolerated.

There are some communities incapable of providing such support, either because they are hopelessly divided, or because they are simply uninterested in their schools. In such cases, some influential figure in the community must become a champion of educational reform. This figure could be a member of congress or a legislator, a government official or a traditional leader, or even a successful businessperson or church leader. The function of this champion is to keep pressure on the principal and faculty to do everything needed to raise the standards of the school and keep them high.

The climate of success in a school is a product of a combination of forces, as we see in the more successful public and private schools. The principal advertises the expectations of the school among its clientele and enforces it with the teachers but with encouragement and support from the local community. The teachers communicate this to their students, but the community is again there to back up teachers when they enunciate this message.

In such a system there are strong controls, forces brought to bear on the trustees of our young to do everything they can to make their educational experience a success. When a positive environment is in place, the different stakeholders exercise influence to make sure that the quality of education is maintained. Principals supervise their teachers not just because they feel that this is part of their job, but because they know that the community will hold them accountable for what happens in the

school. Teachers exercise influence on one another inasmuch as they are part of a team in which each person must do his or her job well or else jeopardize the success of the whole operation. Teachers perform well in part because they are ashamed to let one another down. At the same time, the education department is pushing for quality education from the other side, creating a push-pull situation in the school. The principal and teachers are caught between the local community and the department of education, with both demanding results from the school. In the best schools there is an accountability system in which the lines of responsibility run in several different directions.

Hope for the Future?

Can we hope that such a climate of success will be established in Micronesian schools? It already exists in some of our better schools, public as well as private. Why should it not be possible to create such a climate in any community that wants its schools to be good? There are some fine public schools in every part of Micronesia – islands of excellence, they might be called – that could serve as models for other schools as they embark on their own efforts to improve. Likiep and Wotje Elementary schools in the Republic of the Marshall Islands come to mind, as well as the public schools in Melekeok and Peleliu in Palau. In Pohnpei, Ohmine and Seinwar schools have long been considered among the best, although other schools such as Net Elementary are beginning to challenge them. Fanif and Gagil seem to be among the top schools in Yap, while Utwe and Lelu are at the top of the list in Kosrae. In Chuuk, Moch seems to have replaced Namoluk as one of the best schools, while not so long ago Sino Memorial on Toloas was regarded as superior.

For all the problems that education in Micronesia has encountered over the years, we should not forget the richer legacy that has been left to us. Some of the remote atolls enjoyed the fruits of an ethic that furnished the young people an education far beyond what the small population on these islands would seem to warrant. For example, Eauripik, one of the atolls in Yap State, produced a disproportionate number of men who have held lofty positions in government and business. I also remember hearing years ago what adults on one outlier of Pohnpei would tell their boys and girls when they left home to pursue their education abroad: "Don't come back until you have finished your degree, no matter how long it might take." This was a testimony to the value that these Islanders placed on education.

Palau, too, has long been known for the way in which it prizes education. At the end of World War II, after a long confinement on Babeldoab during the final years of the conflict, Palauans were finally allowed to return to their own villages to rebuild their shattered communities. It is said that upon their return, people only began rebuilding their own homes after they had finished work on the village school. Such was the value they placed on education.

Islands of Excellence

By Francis X. Hezel, S.J.

Education in Micronesia undeniably has its problems. School administrators have often complained that few 8th graders in island public schools can read above the 3rd grade U.S. standard. Over the past 5 years, more than 2 out of every 3 Marshallese public school students failed the Pacific Islands Literacy Level Skills (PILLS) test (see Table 2.12 on page 18). The average score for the Federated States of Micronesia's (FSM's) 6th graders on the national standards test for math was a low 37% (see Table 2.7 on page 15). Throughout the region, dropout rates are high. Only 1 of every 4 students beginning 1st grade will make it to high school graduation (see Table 2.18 on page 23).

But it would be unfair to represent this as the whole of the educational picture in Micronesia, because some schools in Micronesia have made long strides forward against great odds. The schools presented in this article, while not the only good schools, are a sample of some of the very best – not just as measured by their test scores, but also in their reputation for good instruction and creative programs. If education in Micronesia is sometimes presented as a sea of mediocrity, these schools stand as islands of excellence in that sea.

In this article the Micronesian Seminar team would like to showcase these schools while holding them to the light in an effort to understand what makes good schools work. The featured schools represent every part of Micronesia. They are elementary schools because any serious attempt at educational reform must begin at the very basic level and proceed upward through the school system. All the schools chosen are also public schools. Private schools are expected to be of high quality, but very good public schools can draw the attention of educators because they are still regarded as something of a novelty. If a few public schools can achieve results like this, any school should be able to improve.

Chuuk

Because Chuuk State is not renowned for the quality of its public schools, with a median score of only 36% on the high school entrance test over the past five years, its successful schools stand out even more sharply than in other places. Mechetiw, the leading school in Chuuk by this measure, boasts an average of 83% over this period, while Moch, the third highest ranked school, has an average of 78% (see Table 2.2 on page 11).

Moch Elementary School, serving a small island in the Mortlocks, has been one of the bright spots in Chuuk's education picture for the past several years. Rebuilt just a few years ago, Moch Elementary is an impressive two-story, L-shaped building recently repainted in white with maroon trim. In its design and decor the school resembles Saramen Chuuk Academy, a 10-year-old Catholic high school that was built at about the same time and under the leadership of clergy from Moch. Constructed with municipal funds supplemented by a Congress of FSM grant, the school towers over the coral island. Together with Moch's newly built church, Moch Elementary School is a monument to the community's pride and self-definition.

Moch's desire to advance the work of education on its island did not end with the construction of a new building. The community provided close oversight of school operations and kept pressure on the school staff to ensure that most students were passing the high school entrance test. Within a few years, the school insisted that its school be expanded to the 10th grade level so that its students would no longer be required to attend junior high school on the nearby island of Satawan. Moch, a

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

close community with strong notions of what constitutes proper behavior for the young, is able to keep its early high-school-aged youth on a tight leash for two more years even as community members strive to upgrade the early secondary level of education for their sons and daughters.

Mechetiw Elementary School, one of the newest public schools in Chuuk, is located in the heart of Weno, the population center of Chuuk, at the opposite end of the urban-rural spectrum from Moch. Mechetiw Elementary, now only about 10 years old, has been near the top of the list of Chuuk's public schools since the day it opened (see Table 2.2 on page 11). At first, classes were held in a thatched hut that leaked so badly that classes had to be cancelled whenever it rained, but just four years ago a new concrete building was constructed. Built on land belonging to the village and funded in part by municipal money, Mechetiw Elementary is a community-owned operation. Villagers use the school building for community meetings anytime school is not in session. Danny Manyear, Principal, explains: "This place, this land, belongs to the village. It doesn't belong to the government . . . So we have the right, the power, the authority to use the building because it belongs to the community."

The village chief, Chitaro William, was heavily involved in the operations of Mechetiw Elementary from the outset. He is usually at the school two or three times a week, sometimes opening the gate in the fence surrounding the school before the first students arrive. He will occasionally line up the students himself and run the morning assembly, reminding students of the importance of their education and urging them to study hard. As the first classes begin, he and some of the parents sit outside the school building, checking to make sure that the students and their teachers are on time. If a teacher should fail to appear, one of the parents will take over the class. The delinquent teacher, however, is not allowed to skip class with impunity. The following day he or she will have to face the reproachful looks of fellow teachers and answer to the principal or possibly to the village chief himself. Principal Manyear has served notice to his staff that any teacher who misses more than three days of class will be put on leave without pay and runs the risk of losing his or her job at the end of the year.

One indication of community support for a school is attendance at Parent Teacher Association (PTA) meetings. The PTA chairman at Mechetiw Elementary claims that more than 100 people are often in attendance. At one meeting, the consensus was that the family of any student who does not show up for class would be fined 25 cents. Another indication of support is the readiness of the community to clean the classrooms and the school grounds.

But the most telling measure of community support for its school is its insistence that instruction should continue for the entire school day. When the government-sponsored hot lunch program was terminated, the village decided that it would feed its students rather than end the school day at 1 p.m., as some of the other schools in Chuuk had been doing. For a year the community brought food to school and prepared lunch for its students until the decision was made for students to bring their own lunches, a practice that continues today. Meanwhile, teachers pool their own food to provide a potluck for the staff every day of the week – an innovation proposed by Manyear and willingly agreed to by the staff. The reason for the change, he tells them, is that as they share food with each other, the spirit of cooperation grows among the staff.

The faculty, with assistance from many of the parents, also offers extra instruction for those students who are lagging behind their peers. Weekend classes are offered before tests, especially during the two or three weeks prior to the high school entrance test. It is hard to imagine a public school open on a Saturday, but this is the case at such times at Mechetiw Elementary. Parents from other villages

on the island have begun pulling their children out of their own village schools and enrolling them in Mechetiw. The success of the school is attracting wide attention.

Teachers at Mechetiw are no better paid than at anywhere else in Chuuk. The school's textbook cabinets would be as barren as those of other schools if it were not for its teachers scouring the education supplies warehouse every summer for any castoff books that they think they might be able to use. When asked what accounts for the school's obvious success, Manyear points to his heart and simply states that anyone who really wants a good school can get what they want. "If we really want to achieve," he says, "if we try our best to create a good school, we'll have one." Mechetiw Elementary School's story is that of a community determined to do just that – to have a good school.

Kosrae

Since Kosrae's schools show relatively little difference in their test scores, nearly any one of them could have been used as a model of excellence (see Table 2.3 on page 12). Lelu Elementary School, the school selected for Kosrae, is one of the biggest on the island, with an enrollment of about 540 students. Due to the lack of classroom space at the local public high school, Lelu Elementary School has been forced to add a 9th grade. In addition to its large enrollment, the school is forced to operate under other limitations. A cutback in the number of work hours per week for all government employees means that school is in session only four days a week and for short hours each day. The regular class day ends at 1:30 p.m. when students are sent home for lunch.

But good schools have a way of turning such limitations into opportunities. Any student at Lelu who is performing poorly is invited back to the school after lunch for tutoring and special remedial work, courtesy of the GEAR UP Program, which is designed to assist slower students. Kosrae's education policy is to offer all the assistance needed to improve the performance of marginal students so that they can qualify for high school. When students do not pass the high school entrance test, which was recently the case for two students, they are given an extra semester of computerized study to help them achieve the necessary skills for secondary school. Failing is simply not an option for students at Lelu Elementary. The two students who did not pass the entrance test the first time were admitted to high school following their successful semester of remedial work.

The size of the student enrollment, although perhaps a drawback, offers the school an opportunity to departmentalize from the very lowest grades up. Teachers are assigned to teach one or two courses rather than all subjects. Hence, teachers who excel in math teach only math; language arts teachers teach nothing but language arts.

Lelu demonstrates that educational excellence is not only attainable by small village schools that enjoy tight community support. Large schools situated in town can also work well when properly managed.

Pohnpei

Perhaps 10 miles out of town, a visitor will notice a break in the mangroves and undergrowth. In a small clearing enclosed by a chainlink fence stands a neat, two-story building that for years has had the reputation of being one of Pohnpei's very best public schools: Seinwar Elementary School. The orderliness is apparent everywhere: in the zoris lined up outside the classroom doors, in the polite Pohnpeian greeting that students chant in unison when a visitor enters the room, even in the line of students walking single-file on one side of the road on their way to and from school. Visitors quickly get the impression that this is a no-nonsense operation.

This impression is confirmed when meeting the principal, Eugenio Ardos, a rather grave man of few words and patently serious purpose who has headed the school for the past 28 years. When one of the teachers says that discipline in this school is "mighty strong," visitors are immediately prepared to accept this statement as the truth. Student absenteeism is very low, the teacher explains. What is even more remarkable, however, is that teacher absenteeism, a chronic problem in most other schools, is almost nil. In Pohnpei, where funerals are week-long occasions steeped in custom that reconfigure the schedules of everyone even distantly related to the deceased, teachers at Seinwar are told that they may be absent from class only when someone in their immediate family has died. Otherwise, they are instructed, they must attend the funeral outside of school hours. Teachers faithfully comply with these strictures, as counter-cultural as they might seem. Few other organizations in Pohnpei would dare to make such demands of their employees.

Orders coming from the principal are never taken lightly, the visitor suspects. Ardos is the undisputed master of this ship, respected not only for his long years of service and his achievements at the school, but because he is the village chief and a senior relative of most of those who teach at Seinwar. Two of the teachers at the school are his brothers, two more his offspring, and mostly everyone else a cousin, nephew, or niece. With such a strong lock on the controls, Ardos runs a tight ship. Most teachers arrive at 7:30 a.m., a half hour before the first classes begin, and they often stay until 4:30 or 5:00 p.m., correcting papers and preparing lessons for the following day. Ardos has high expectations of his staff. Not only are they to be present every day – untended classes, common in many other schools, are almost unknown at Seinwar – but they are expected to have their classes prepared in detail and deliver effective instruction as well.

If Ardos speaks with authority, it is because he has the support of the community behind him. Seinwar was a private school run by the Catholic Church until 1970, when it was turned over to the government to become a public school. A good part of the community had attended the school when it was church-run and insisted on maintaining the reputation for academic excellence that the school had attained in its earlier years. Ardos, who was a teacher at Seinwar during its final years as a private school, draws his inspiration from what the school was in those years and is a living link with the school's earlier tradition.

From the beginning, the community exercised strong control over school policies and the selection of teachers. The people of Seinwar never relinquished to the education department the responsibility for the management of what they continued to regard as their own school. At times this has brought the community into head-on confrontation with the education department, as when the community opposed the introduction of a newly devised unit that would add music and art to the curriculum. The community vetoed the decision, choosing to retain their present emphasis on basic skills. The state education department withdrew their order and allowed the community to take the lead in shaping its own educational vision.

Yap

Several schools in mainland Yap score well on the annual exit test, but there is a small handful that seem to possess special sources of creative energy. Two of these, perhaps the two with the highest overall reputations as superior schools, are Maap and Dalipebinaw.

Maap Community School is a long drive from town, located as it is at the end of a dirt road on the outskirts of one of the most remote villages of Yap. The buildings are well kept but plain; the main classroom building is perpendicular to the school office, a long, cinderblock structure like those seen in many other parts of Micronesia. Yet visitors to the school usually say that there is an energy about

the place that makes it distinctive. Whether the teachers are in the school yard leading their students in a game of kickball or in the classroom teaching arithmetic, they seem enthusiastic about what they are doing – and so do their students. Maap Community School has been known for years for its innovative instructional programs. It was one of the first of many schools in Yap to dedicate one day a week to cultural activities: Yapese dancing, storytelling, farming, and island crafts such as basket weaving. All the other schools in Yap now follow Maap's lead, since life arts has integrated these same cultural activities into the curriculum as one of its basic elements.

At the center of the school's life is its soft-spoken and unassuming principal, Naz Ganangred, who taught for 16 years before he was appointed principal in 1988. Ganangred's humble demeanor belies his influence on the life of the school. He encourages teachers' creativity, challenging them to find new and better ways to instruct pupils. When he developed the cultural activities program that would become the model for Life Arts Day, he was transferred from his present position to the state education office to supervise the program. Within a year, however, he was reassigned to Maap Community School at the insistence of his staff, who show the same loyalty to him today as they did then. His teachers invariably comment on how he constantly solicits input from his staff. The suggestion box outside his office is one indication of this, but an even more striking one is his willingness to spend up to two hours of school time each week evaluating the educational efforts and strategies that the staff has been using.

Ganangred admits that his passion for good education was born in part of his own frustrations as a student. When he himself was still a student at Maap Community School, the school was temporarily closed because of lack of funds. Since he was unable to find transportation to the nearest village school, he stayed home for a year until Maap School was reopened. He vowed that he would never allow that same thing to happen to his own students. Perhaps he need not fear, because his enthusiasm seems to have infected his teaching staff and the Maap community. Even though he may be the guiding force in the school, he is clear in stating that the school belongs to the people of Maap, not only in theory but through their heavy involvement in policy making and direction.

Dalipebinaw School, which is situated just a few minutes down the road from the garment factory and much closer to town, is sometimes referred to as "the showcase of the state education department." When said by a person from Dalipebinaw, the remark is usually followed by an explanation that the village school owes just as much to the community as it does to the education department. The building itself, a brand new two-story concrete structure with a huge water catchment alongside it, was the result of the community's hard work in seeking outside sources of funding. The village decided to take the initiative and worked directly with outside donors to obtain the money needed to put up the new building.

The school then enhanced and expanded the state-designed curriculum to meet the desires of their community. When a child is enrolled at Dalipebinaw, the parents are required to sign a contract in which they agree to allow the child to participate in all school activities. Parents also commit themselves to coming to the school to discuss with the staff their child's behavior.

The school's strong ties to the community are part of the legacy of a former principal, who died a few years ago. Since the present principal is young and has little experience in education, the staff and community still reverently invoke the policies that the earlier principal formulated in an effort to continue in the direction that he set for the school. Even aside from its strong community links, Dalipebinaw has such an appealing educational program and reputation for excellence that it attracts students from other villages on the island. The school sees itself as a superior educational institution,

one that is guided but not constrained by the goals and curriculum issued by the State Department of Education. When asked to identify the strongest feature of the school, the chairman of the PTA replied without hesitation, "community participation." Clearly, Dalipebinaw achieved all that it has because it has been a school that truly belongs to the community.

Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI)

When someone asks what the best public school is in RMI, the answer comes easily: "Likiep, of course." None of the other public elementary schools even comes close in the annual standard tests that are used to measure student achievement. With an average pass rate of 82% on the high school entrance test and the top score in the PILLS test over the past five years, Likiep stands alone of all the public schools in the select company of the private schools at the head of the list (see Table 2.11 on page 18).

Some people attribute the school's success to the unique history of the island, which was purchased from traditional chiefs by two European settlers more than 100 years ago. Most, however, give the credit to the Maryknoll sisters, who took over the administration of the school in 1994. The people of Likiep had a happy experience in the 1950s when the Maryknoll sisters ran a top-quality school on the island for nearly a decade before the dwindling population forced it to close.

The sisters signed a memorandum of understanding with the Ministry of Education that they would assume responsibility for operating Likiep Elementary School as a public school. Up to that time, the school had an undistinguished record; teacher absenteeism was high, classes were conducted for only half a day, and very few of the 8th graders were accepted for high school. The community was dissatisfied with its school and enthusiastically agreed to having the sisters take over running the school.

When the sisters took over, they did not bring a large broom to sweep away what had gone before. The teachers, dedicated people but without direction, stayed on at the school. Unlike many other schools in RMI and FSM, Likiep Elementary School had instructional materials – dated but adequate. What the sisters brought to the school was a sense of purpose, a detailed curriculum, and a willingness to train the teachers in how to use the curriculum guide. The sisters also insisted that the teachers come in on time every day and that classes not be canceled for the slightest excuse.

The community supported the changes that the sisters made in the school. Likiep had long thought of itself as distinct from and perhaps more progressive than other Marshallese atolls. Years ago when the island was purchased and settled by foreigners, it was freed from chiefly authority and embarked on a long journey of fusing European pragmatism with island ways. Whatever problems their school may have had through the years, the people on Likiep always had a sense of how important education was. Today the Likiep community has taken ownership of its school as never before. PTA meetings are very well attended; most families send at least one member to represent them.

Today, Likiep Elementary School possesses a vitality that is enviable to other schools in the area. Students in the lower grades maintain a garden plot, tending, measuring, and graphing the growth of their plants to learn the basic skills needed in science courses. Students engage in the same type of hands-on learning through their work with tiny turtles in a shore-side tank, part of the school's conservation project. Students also walk around the school grounds daily picking up trash, and no graffiti can be seen on any of the school buildings. As we find in many of the other top-flight schools, the student body and community have become protective of the appearance of their school.

Several years ago the Maryknoll sisters turned over the administration to the principal and community leaders, but since then Likiep Elementary has maintained its high standing among RMI public schools. Teachers continue to use the curriculum guides that the sisters introduced, and the school policies they established are still embraced by the community and enforced by the faculty. Two of the sisters still visit the school two or three times a year to hold training sessions for the teachers and to encourage the community to keep a vigilant eye on school operations. Their visits are essential to the success of the school. They act as kind of a quality control, making sure that the curriculum is being followed and revising the curriculum materials as needed. To date the transition appears to have been made successfully, at least from the test scores of the students. Likiep's students continue to pass the entrance test to the public high schools in very high numbers, with some of the better students qualifying for some of the more exclusive private schools in the region (see Table 2.11 on page 18).

Republic of Palau

Peleliu, the site of a famous World War II battle, is an island that lies about 20 miles south of Koror. With a population of no more than a few hundred people, the island might appear to be a backwater in a nation that is known for its rapid and successful modernization. Yet, Peleliu boasts one of the very best elementary schools in Palau. Peleliu Elementary School, the single school on the island, has placed near the top of the list of Palau schools in the standard tests given each year and has become synonymous with quality education (see Table 2.15 on page 20).

The school had one enormous asset from the start: a strong community spirit like that of Seinwar, Likiep, and some of the other places from which good schools have emerged. Peleliu is well known, even by Palau standards, for its "can do" spirit and its desire to excel. As one local educator puts it, "People from Peleliu expect their island to be at the top." The island has always had a reputation for producing some of the fastest runners and the best athletes in Palau. As often as not, teams from the island win the field days and sports events in which they compete. When they win, they receive resounding acclaim from the people of their island, who turn out in surprising numbers to cheer them on.

Peleliu may have enjoyed a reputation as a sports powerhouse, but its school was mediocre until Emery Wenty took over as principal in 1992. According to Wenty, the school's test scores for the yearly high school entrance test were close to the bottom. At that time, teachers were casual in showing up for work on time and would frequently skip classes on Friday to spend the day in Koror. Teachers did their own work when they were in school but seldom talked with one another about their classes or broader issues involving the entire school. "There were no clear standards or guidelines or rules or policies that students and faculty were expected to follow," Wenty recalls.

When he became principal, Wenty immediately set about to change the climate of the school and improve the morale among staff and students. He began by insisting that the teachers dress like professionals – shoes and trousers and nice shirts, as opposed to the T-shirts and shorts they had been wearing. Beginning with his new dress code, Wenty led staff to look at themselves and their work in a different light. He stressed the importance of interaction among the faculty – they were all jointly responsible for creating a climate of success, he reasoned. He visited teachers' classrooms frequently, commenting on even small details, such as the way in which a teacher's desk was positioned. He would always urge that his teachers be innovative: "Try something different, something new."

The effects of his reforms were palpable. Teacher absenteeism dropped. Teachers began to rely on one another for advice and encouragement while generating real enthusiasm for their work with stu-

dents. As the climate in the school changed and the "can do" spirit for which Peleliu was well known infused the school, test scores improved, and children began to spend more time at school, even after classes ended. One strong magnet was the computer lab Wenty set up with the help of outside funding, even as he succeeded in persuading all his staff to become computer literate. The children looked for excuses to stay after school each day. Like their teachers, students had become comfortable at school. They also were proud of their school. The community of Peleliu was too, because community members knew that their island was now distinguished for more than its fabled athletic ability.

Reforming a small village school is one matter, but creating an educational turnabout in a large urban school is a different matter altogether. Take, for instance, the case of Koror Elementary School, with an enrollment of nearly 800 students. For years the school was overshadowed by George Harris Elementary School, Koror's other large public school. Now, however, by virtue of its standard test scores, it stands with Peleliu Elementary School and one or two others as one of the leading schools in Palau (see Table 2.15 on page 20).

The community cohesiveness and sense of purpose that was so integral to the success of some of the village schools is a very small factor in the turnaround of Koror Elementary School, located as it is in the center of town. Because most of the parents, mothers as well as fathers, are employed, there is not the same degree of support as there is in smaller rural schools. Attendance at PTA meetings, although it can number over a hundred people, is still small in relation to the size of the student body. The construction and the maintenance of the school are left entirely to the Ministry of Education and the school staff. Parents may help out in small ways, as when they purchased two blackboards for a 1st grade teacher who sought their help, but they are not a major force in fashioning the school's policies or participating in its day-to-day operations.

What, then, was responsible for the recent improvement in the school? Based on interviews with the staff, the answer is clear: a principal with vision, a strong sense of purpose, and the personal skills necessary to fuse 40 teachers into a team. In this case, the principal seems to have focused on three important areas: establishing high standards of discipline for students, setting clear expectations for the staff, and being committed to helping teachers grow in their work skills and personal development. While the principal might hold teachers accountable for their behavior, he was also ready to listen to staff members' problems and offer them opportunities to attend workshops that might help make them better teachers. As one teacher observed, most Palau schools, have computer labs these days. However, it is not these or any other facilities that bring about education reforms; it is dedicated leadership committed to quality education.

Conclusion

When confronted with what sometimes appears to be insoluble difficulties with their schools, educators may be tempted to throw up their hands and write off schools as a foreign innovation incompatible with island culture and its management style. If this is so, then poorly functioning schools, like broken-down pickups, should either be fixed with the help of the manufacturer's manual or, failing this, relegated to the junkyard. In this view, the solutions to educational problems, if there are any, are to be found in American educational strategies, since the schools are seen as foreign imports of U.S. design.

But the truth is that Micronesian schools, like Micronesian churches, have become an indispensable feature of the sociocultural landscape in the islands today. Indeed, the churches, not foreign governments, first introduced formal schooling to Micronesia, even though our most recent and imposing

models have been the public school systems created by the Japanese and American administrations. At one time schools might have been dismissed as foreign artifacts, but not after decades of adaptation under local leadership. Formal education, once grafted from an alien plant, has taken root in island Micronesia and bears rich fruit in at least some places.

Micronesian educators need not turn immediately to the U.S. for solutions to educational problems. Nor should they regard private schools, as outstanding as their contribution has been over the years, as the only model of quality education. Public education has its own success stories, multiplying by the year, and these deserve more attention than they receive. In its brief description of a few of these "islands of excellence," this article has tried to show some of the innovative approaches to curriculum adaptation and, even more importantly, to highlight some successful management strategies.

The approaches that these schools have taken en route to educational excellence are varied, as we have seen. While these stories offer no simple formula for school success, there are certainly a few common themes. Many of the schools described here would not have been able to accomplish what they did without strong community support developing over time into a sense of community ownership of the school. As one theme that runs through the description of several of the schools selected for presentation here, strong community support seems to be a useful starting point for attempts to reform education.

Another theme of these success stories is strong leadership, usually but not always in the person of the principal. Some schools continue to draw on the inspiration and creative work of a past administrator, while others look to prominent figures in the community for leadership. Not even a well-trained and dedicated group of teachers can ensure the success of a school that is without strong leadership or effective community support.

References

Asian Development Bank. (1996). *Human resource development in Micronesia: An assessment of the context and conditions of education and training*. London: International Resource Development.

FSM Department of Economic Affairs. (2000). *FSM economic statistics*. Pohnpei: FSM National Government.

FSM National Government. (1999). *Proceedings of the second FSM economic summit*. Pohnpei, FSM: Author.

FSM Office of Planning and Statistics. (1985). *Federated States of Micronesia: First national development plan 1985-1989*. Pohnpei: FSM National Government.

FSM Office of Planning and Statistics. (1994). *1994 FSM census of population and housing: National detailed tables*. Pohnpei: FSM National Government.

Hezel, F.X., & Levin, M. (1990). Micronesian emigration: The brain drain in Palau, Marshalls and the Federated States. In J. Connell, (Ed.), *Migration and development in the South Pacific* (pp. 42-60). Canberra: Australian National University.

Mason, L.E. (1975). The many faces of Micronesia: District center and outer island culture. *Pacific Asian Studies, 1*(1), 5-37.

Republic of Palau Office of Planning and Statistics. (1995). *1995 census of population and housing, Republic of Palau*. Koror, Palau: Author.

Republic of Palau Office of Planning and Statistics. (1995). *Statistical yearbook 1994*. Koror, Palau: Author.

Republic of Palau Office of Planning and Statistics. (2000). *2000 census of population and housing of the Republic of Palau:* Basic tables. Koror, Palau: Author.

RMI Office of Planning and Statistics. (1985). *Republic of the Marshall Islands first five-year development plan, 1985-1989*. Majuro, Marshall Islands: Author.

RMI Office of Planning and Statistics. (1994). *Marshall Islands statistical abstract 1992*. Majuro, Marshall Islands: Author.

RMI Office of Planning and Statistics. (1999). *1999 census of population and housing: Final report*. Majuro, Marshall Islands: Author.

U.S. Department of Commerce. (1992). *1990 census of population and housing: Republic of Palau*. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.

U. S. Department of State. (1982). *34th annual report to the United Nations on the administration of the trust territory of the Pacific Islands for the period October 1, 1980 to September 30, 1981*. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.

PACIFIC RESOURCES FOR EDUCATION AND LEARNING

1099 Alakea Street, 25th Floor, Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813
Phone: (808) 441-1300 ■ Fax: (808) 441-1385 ■ Email: askprel@prel.org
Website: www.prel.org

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

RS0201

U.S. Department of Education
Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI)
National Library of Education (NLE)
Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC)

NOTICE

Reproduction Basis

	This document is covered by a signed "Reproduction Release (Blanket)" form (on file within the ERIC system), encompassing all or classes of documents from its source organization and, therefore, does not require a "Specific Document" Release form.
X	This document is Federally-funded, or carries its own permission to reproduce, or is otherwise in the public domain and, therefore, may be reproduced by ERIC without a signed Reproduction Release form (either "Specific Document" or "Blanket").